

how they admired the picturesque-looking man who went around with the hat, as he passed with perfect balance from gondola to gondola, stepping on the edge, or end, or over the side without disturbing the equilibrium, as though he had been walking on land. At length I heard Mrs. Benson say:

"It is after ten, girls, and we must return to the hotel; we ought to be all tired after our journey." She signalled to her gondolier, who instantly sprang to the end of his boat as no one but a Venetian gondolier can, and began to back out of the crowd with perfect ease.

I told our gondolier to precede them to the hotel and get us there before them. As we moved off I heard one, who looked like the youngest, say:

"Oh, Mamma, it is perfectly heavenly, the gondola, the gondolier, the music, the Canal, the moon, all Venice; how I love it!" I registered a silent vow that I would try to make them all love Venice.

The Bensons' gondola came in as ours pulled out, and Jim and I helped the ladies to the Riva. We asked them how they enjoyed the evening; they all exclaimed at once: "It was lovely, charming, heavenly, we would like it to go on forever!"

They then bade us good-night. Jim and I went to our rooms and sat far into the night on our own balcony, looking down upon the lovely scene. The moon was at her best, and turned to silver the dome of the Church of the Salute, across the Canal. From our height we could see over the lower houses across the way to the Canal beyond, then another island, beyond that the broad Giudecca Canal, right away